the Essential Commodities Act and Prevention of Black Marketing and Maintenance of Supplies of Essentail Commodities Act etc. by the State/UT Governments. The State Govt. of Assam has also taken steps to control the prices by interaction with the traders, regular reviewing of the stock position and initiating action against black marketeers and hoarders etc.

Theft of Rice from FCI Godown

3415. SHRI RAJ NATH SINGH: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that an amount of approximately 15 lakh Tonnes of rice has been stolen from the Food Corporation's Godown last year;

(b) if so, the action taken by Government in this regard and result thereof; and

(c) if no action has been taken, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS (SHRI SATYAPAL SINGH YADAV): (a) An amount of 85.781 MTs of rice worth Rs. 10,60,239.00 was stolen from FCI's godowns during the year 1997-98.

(b) theft cases have been reported to Police Authorities for taking further necessary action. In addition, departmental action has also been initiated against erring officials/officers. Out of total stolen rice, recovery has been made/ordered in respect of rice weighing 76.241 MTs worth Rs. 9,95,646.00. Departmental action has been initiated against 24 FCI personnel. 6 alleged thieves (non-FCI persons) were apprehended by Police in connection with above theft cases.

(c) Does not arise in view of (b) above.

WHO's prediction regarding death of one million women due to T.B.

3416. DR. D. VENKATESHWAR RAO: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the World Health Organisation has predicted that one million women will die of T.B. this year; and

(b) if so, the measures taken in India to control the disease efficiently?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI DALIT EZHILMALAI): (a) and (b) No, Sir. However, to control TB the Government has introduced the Revised National TB Control Programme with World Bank assistacce and the revised strategy will be implemented in 102 districts of the country over the next 3 years, with the objective of achieving a cure rate of 85% in these districts against the national average of 30%.

Functioning of Jipmer Hospital, Pondicherry

3417. SHRI C. P. THIRUNAVUKKARASU: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether he had recently made a surprise visit at JIPMER Hospital, Pondicherry and said that the functioning of the Hospital is alarming and bad;

(b) if so, whether any steps have been taken to improve the functioning of the Hospital;

(c) whether the Committee has appointed to ascertain the functioning of the Hospital, and

(d) if so, whether any report was submitted by the Committees, and any action was taken on that report?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND